



Premieres

Personalities

Portraits

new music concerts

94  
5 sea  
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Robert Aitken  
artistic director



new music

new music concerts

presents

cheap imitation

fractal epitaph

**kasemets**

mandelbrot music

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a portrait concert

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tenney

form II

Sunday, April 9th, 1995, 8:00 pm

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Premiere Dance Theatre, Harbourfront Centre

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Sunday, April 9, 1995, 8:00pm  
Premiere Dance Theatre  
Harbourfront Centre

# Udo Kasemets

a portrait concert

## Programme

John Cage

**Cheap Imitation (1969-72) dur. 35'**

Accordes String Quartet, ARRAYMUSIC,  
5th Species, New Music Concerts Ensemble

Udo Kasemets

**Fractal Epitaph ▼**

**for John Cage (1992-95) dur. 7'**

Susan Layard, soprano  
Accordes String Quartet

## INTERMISSION

James Tenney

**Form 2 ▼**

**in memoriam John Cage (1993) dur. 17'**

Accordes String Quartet, ARRAYMUSIC,  
5th Species, New Music Concerts Ensemble

Udo Kasemets

**Mandelbrot Music  $z \rightarrow z^2 + c$**

**QSOSQ ▼ ♦ (1993-94) dur. 27'**

Accordes String Quartet, ARRAYMUSIC,  
5th Species, New Music Concerts Sextet  
Susan Layard, soprano

# Programme

**Accordes String Quartet**

Fujiko Imajishi, violin, Marie Berard, violin,  
Douglas Perry, viola, David Hetherington, cello

**ARRAYMUSIC**

Michael J. Baker, artistic director/percussion,  
Roberto Occhipinti, double bass, Henry Kucharzyk,  
piano/celeste, Marc Sabat, violin, Rick Sacks,  
percussion, Robert Stevenson, clarinet/bass  
clarinet, Trevor Tureski, percussion, Michael White,  
trumpet

**5th Species**

Anne Thompson, flute, Elizabeth Van Cleve, oboe/  
English horn, Laurie Freedman, clarinet, Kathy  
Robertson, French horn, Shannon Peet, bassoon

**New Music Concerts Ensemble**

Robert Aitken, artistic director/flutes, Dianne Aitken,  
flute/piccolo, Barbara Bolte, oboe, John Gzowski,  
guitar, Scott Irvine, tuba, John Jowett, trombone,  
Perry White, alto saxophone, Janice Lindskog, harp

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New Music Concerts presents

# Udo Kasemets

a portrait concert

*For years I have been fascinated by systems which humans have devised to bring order to their observations and understanding of the events in the universe. I have studied the I Ching, the Mayan Calendar Round, Buckminster Fuller's Synergetics, Stephen Hawking's History of Time, Johannes Kepler's Harmony of the World, the fundamentals of modern astronomy, principles of phonetics and alphabetics of various cultures, the structure of the DNA helix, and more, and have attempted to establish correspondences between data representing certain features of some of these systems and data defining parameters of systems ordering sounds in time and space.*

**Udo Kasemets**

Composer, conductor, pianist, organist, vocal coach, writer, critic, educator, dedicated concert-goer and entrepreneur, **Udo Kasemets** has been an integral and energetic part of the new music community in Toronto since the late 1950's. Born in Estonia in 1919, Kasemets came to Canada by way of Germany in 1951; he became a Canadian citizen in 1957. His early musical training took place at the Conservatory in his hometown of Tallinn and continued at the Stuttgart Academy of Music. Immediately prior to his immigration to Canada he attended master classes by Ernst Krenek, Edgard Varèse, and Hermann Scherchen at the Kranichstein Institute for New Music in Darmstadt that were to make a profound impression upon him.

As a consequence of this experience the conventional, folk-influenced compositions of Kasemet's youth evolved over the years to embrace the dodecaphonic systems typical of the mid-1950's. By 1960, however, he abandoned this Euro-centric approach entirely in favour of the open forms, unconventional notations, and chance procedures pioneered in the works of John Cage.

Kasemet's radical conversion was initially celebrated by few and deplored by many. The presentations he organized at the Isaacs Gallery, the *Musica Viva* concerts, and the "*Men, Minds and Music*" series, while controversial and dismissed by a certain churlish music critic as "*a complete waste of time*", were nonetheless seminal events in the development of contemporary musical culture in Canada. In the late sixties Kasemets planned and directed the first Toronto Festival of Arts and Technology, founded and edited the publication *Canavanguard*, and lectured and performed throughout North America. From 1971 until his retirement in 1987 he lectured on music and mixed media for the Faculty of Experimental Art at the Ontario College of Art while continuing to organize concerts of his own and other composer's music.

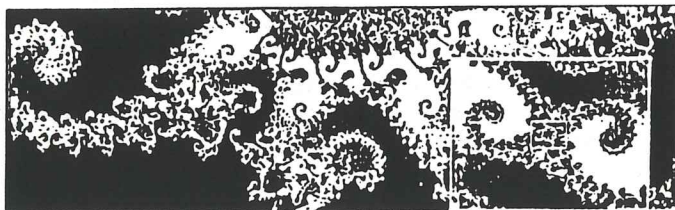
## **Udo Kasemets: FRACTAL EPITAPH for John Cage (1992/1995)**

*Just as in his living days John Cage, both as a person and a composer, was a great inspiration to many a musician, his death in August 1992 prompted for quite a few composers the only possible immediate reaction: to write a piece of music to celebrate the life of the deceased giant.*

***Fractal Epitaph***, in its original form for solo voice and piano, was conceived and notated August 13-15, 1992. In March 1995 it was revised, and also translated into a version for voice and string quartet.

The four notes, C-A-G-E, provide the sole pitch material for the composition. Five vowel sounds in various permutations and combinations form the foundation for the vocalization. The overall structure is derived from what is called a 'Cantor set' (named after the turn-of-the-century German mathematician Georg Cantor), a description of a process which eventually led to the understanding of the concepts of self-similarities and fractals.

**Udo Kasemets**



**Udo Kasemets:  $z \rightarrow z^2 + c$   
MANDELBROT MUSIC QSOSQ (1993-94)**

Many naturally occurring shapes (plants, clouds, rivers, etc.) consist of nondifferentiable curves that cannot be defined as solutions to a set of differential equations. Benoit Mandelbrot coined the term *fractal* to describe these curves which possess the unique property of self-similarity. The iterative process of growth that results from the equation  $z \rightarrow z^2 + c$  can also be translated into musical notation, and from there into organized sounds in time and space. The composer has described this particular musical exploration of the Mandelbrot Set as follows:

**QSOSQ** is the fourth music drawn from the formula  $z \rightarrow z^2 + c$ . Commissioned by New Music Concerts (with financial assistance from the Ontario Arts Council) **QSOSQ** -Quintet-Sextet-Octet-Solo-Quartet- is scored for ensembles and individual musicians whose work I have come to respect and with whom I have had working relationships over a period of thirty years.

The graph of the MANDELBROT SET is divided into four quadrants by its horizontal and vertical axis. The musical structure of **QSOSQ** is based on these divisions. The score has five distinct sections:

## **VERTICAL**

Tutti of all four ensembles playing music derived from numbers related to the vertical axis of the graph;

## **DIAGONAL I**

Octet, Quartet, Quintet and Sextet, following each other in this order, and each playing music derived from numbers related to the diagonal bisecting one of the four quadrants;

## **TRANSITIONAL**

Solo bridging the positive/negative halves of the graph;

## **DIAGONAL II**

Sextet, Quintet, Quartet, Octet, entering in this order, joining in a canon, each playing music derived from numbers related to the diagonal bisecting the quadrant opposite to the one in the earlier section;

## **HORIZONTAL**

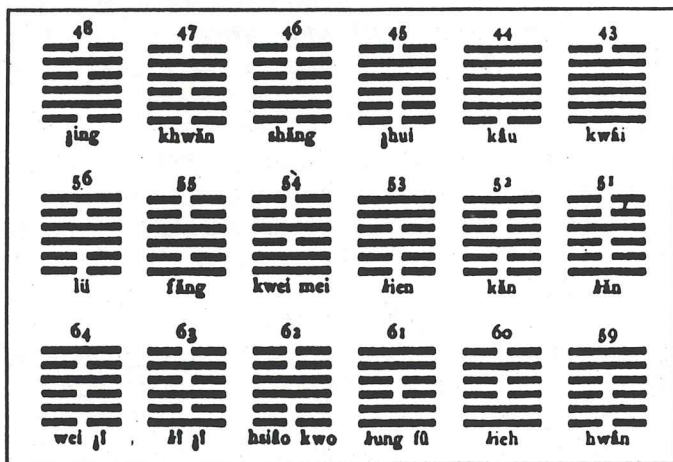
Tutti of all four ensembles playing music derived from numbers related to the horizontal axis of the graph.

**Udo Kasemets**



*In Zen they say: If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four. If still boring, try it for eight, sixteen, thirty-two, and so on. Eventually one discovers that it's not boring at all but very interesting.*

**John Cage**



**John Cage** (1912-1992), the leading composer of the American avant-garde, continues to be a powerful aesthetic influence throughout the musical world. A student of Schoenberg and Cowell, his approach to music was completely original and visionary. Among his innovations were the development of the 'prepared' piano, the early use of tape and other electronic resources, and, most significantly, the development of the principle of **Indeterminacy**. Intensely interested in Asian philosophy, by 1950 he was studying the *I Ching*, the Chinese "Book of Changes". In his four-volume piano work of 1951, *Music of Changes*, pitches, durations and timbres are all determined by the use of charts derived from the *I Ching* and the tossing of three coins.

**John Cage: CHEAP IMITATION (1969/1972)**

This composition grew out of a choreographic project by Merce Cunningham that was set to the music of the first part of Erik Satie's "symphonic drama", *Socrate* (1918). Cunningham had commissioned Cage to make a conventional two-piano reduction of the first section of Satie's masterpiece, originally scored for voice (or voices) and orchestra, in 1944. In 1969, when Cage and Cunningham proposed to expand their earlier production to encompass the entirety of Satie's composition, they were discouraged to learn that Satie's publisher would not grant them permission to use Cage's unauthorized piano reduction.

Cage's solution to this dilemma was to alter the original melodic line of Satie's work by subjecting it to chance operations through the use of the *I Ching*. The results of each divination determined which of the seven "white notes", which of the chromatic notes, and which notes of a given transposition were to be extracted from the melodic line of Satie's composition. The first version of the work was scored for solo piano; the subsequent orchestral version (for which additional *I Ching*-derived determinations were made concerning orchestration, durations and articulations) dates from 1972. In 1977, at the request of Paul Zukofsky, Cage made yet another arrangement of the work for solo violin.

**James Tenney**, born in Silver City, New Mexico in 1934, studied with a succession of prominent American avant-gardists and electronics experts. Among them were Carl Ruggles, Lejaren Hiller, Kenneth Gaburo, and Edgard Varèse. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music, Bennington College (B.A. 1958), and the Univer-

sity of Illinois (M.A. 1961). In the early 1960's, in collaboration with Max Mathews and others at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, he became deeply involved in the development of computer music. Tenney is currently both Professor of Music and Distinguished Research Professor at York University in Toronto and has written works for a variety of media, both instrumental and electronic, many of them using alternative tuning systems.

**James Tenney: FORM 2 (1993)  
in memoriam John Cage**

*Form 2 is the second in a set of four pieces in memory of composers who were important to me in one way or another, as teacher, mentor, or exemplar (the others are Edgard Varèse, Stefan Wolpe, and Morton Feldman). Each piece uses an abbreviated pitch-time notation which requires a certain degree of rhythmic improvisation by the players, although the result is very carefully controlled harmonically, dynamically and formally. No allusion to Cage's music is intended here, although the degree of indeterminacy in my own work would have been inconceivable before his musical explorations of "nature's manner of operation".*

**James Tenney**

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# NEW MUSIC CONCERTS 25TH ANNIVERSARY COMPOSERS' CONTEST

FIRST PRIZE\* \$3,000 donated by the Herbert Aitken Foundation

## CALL FOR SCORES

As part of its Silver Anniversary Celebrations, New Music Concerts invites composers to submit scores for chamber ensemble. The winning composer will receive a cash award of \$3,000 and a performance on the New Music Concerts' series.

## INSTRUMENTATION

Chamber works for 3 to 15 performers including not more than 4 singers are eligible. Electronics are acceptable.

## ELEGIBILITY

The competition is open to all Canadian citizens and landed immigrants who were born on or after May 1, 1959. Each composer may submit up to three works which must not have been previously performed in public or accepted for performance.

## APPLICATION

Composers are asked to send 2 copies of each score. In the event of a prize winning work, it is the responsibility of the composer to provide performance material of professional quality. The scores should be marked with a code name chosen by the composer and must be accompanied by a sealed envelope bearing the same code word and containing the participant's name, address and curriculum vitae. Neither the submitted materials nor the sealed envelope may bear any indication revealing the authorship other than the code word.

## DEADLINE AND JUDGING

All materials must be received by May 1, 1995. An independent jury of four renowned composers and performers plus a chairman will choose the prize winning works. The chairman will vote only in the case of a tie. Prize money will be awarded at the discretion of the jury and the decision of the judges will be final. The winner will be announced on or before June 15, 1995.

\*Further prizes are anticipated depending upon available funds.

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Udo Kasemets **5**

Sunday, April 30, 1995  
The Great Hall at Hart House  
University of Toronto  
Olivier Messiaen **6**

Sunday, April 30, 1995  
Premiere Dance Theatre  
Harbourfront Centre  
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